



April 2014

Sleep to Better Health



About 70 million Americans have chronic sleep disorders. Many more say they get too little sleep and often feel tired as a result. And sleep deprivation is connected to numerous health problems.

How? People with insomnia or sleep apnea (breathing cessation) have increased risk for cardiovascular conditions, such as high blood pressure, stroke, coronary heart disease and irregular heartbeat.

Insufficient sleep also raises the risk for type 2 diabetes, depression, and metabolic changes linked to obesity.

The good news? **You can improve your sleep.** Here's how:

- **Try exercise:** Even a 10-minute exercise session can help improve your sleep, according to the National Sleep Foundation. More exercise is better. Try walking briskly or swimming laps for 30 minutes.
- **Identify your sleep robbers.** Maybe it's caffeine or alcohol (especially close to bedtime) or medications, pain, indigestion or worry. Record your sleep patterns for a month to identify the culprits.

If these steps fail to help, see your health care provider.

City Events

Adopting a Healthy Lifestyle

Tuesday, April 8 12 noon - 1:00 pm
Webinar
Login: See future flyer*

Asset Allocation - Deferred Compensation

Thursday, April 17 12 noon - 12:45 pm
SMT 4080

Purchasing a Home

Tuesday, April 22 12 noon - 1:00 pm
SMT 4050

Building Skills to Handle Life's Pressures

Thursday, April 24 12 noon - 1:00 pm
Webinar
Login: See future flyer*

Getting Started Biking Expo

Thursday, April 24 See back page

Planning for Retirement

Tuesday, April 29 12 noon - 1:00 pm
Retirement Office
720 Third Avenue, Suite 900

Free Blood Pressure Screening

Wednesday, April 30
Stop by between 10:30 am & 1:30 pm
SMT 4096

Calculate Total Retirement - Deferred Compensation

Wednesday, April 30 12 noon - 12:45 pm
SMT 4020

* Or, call Central Benefits at (206) 615-1340.

Get Started Biking Expo for City Employees

Thursday, April 24

11:00 am - 1:30 pm SMT 3rd floor lobby

Information about bike commuting and where to park your bike; team sign ups; Metro bus bike rack loading practice

11:30 am - 1:00 pm SMT 4080

Introduction to Bike Commuting class & Flat Fixing clinic

Visit mytrips.seattle.gov/ for more information

******Save the Date******

Friday, May 16 Bike to Work Day!

News & Notes



General Information

Take Charge! is a general guide to health benefits and healthy behavior. Contact your health care professional with your specific health care concerns.

Alcohol and Your Health

Heavy drinking can cause serious health problems, including heart disease, stroke, liver damage, depression, anxiety and violence. Excessive alcohol use in the U.S. causes 1.2 million emergency room visits and 2.7 million physician visits annually.

What is heavy drinking? For women, it is having more than 1 drink a day. For men, it's more than 2 drinks a day. A standard drink is 12 ounces of regular beer or wine cooler, 5 ounces of wine or 1.5 ounces of 80-proof distilled liquor (e.g. gin, rum, vodka, whiskey).

Wonder if you are drinking too much? Take the CAGE Questionnaire on the right*.

Each answer is worth 1 point. One point indicates a possible problem; 2 points indicate a probable problem with alcohol use. If you are concerned about your drinking, contact your health care provider.

CAGE Questionnaire

Have you ever felt:

- ☐ Cutting back on your drinking would be wise?
- ☐ Annoyed when someone criticizes your drinking?
- ☐ Guilty about your drinking?
- ☐ Eye-opening drink first thing upon waking to help steady your nerves or relieve a hangover?

*The University of North Carolina developed CAGE to help health care providers screen for alcoholism.

Alcohol
Awareness
Month

